

MUSUQ CHASKI

"THE NEW MESSENGER"

ProjectsAbroad

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In K'achampa dance, "coyas" show their coquetry, dancing to music in a trance conducive to romance.

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Slices of tender Octopus topped with a smooth olive sauce prepared with extra virgin olive oil.



IT'S PARTY TIME!

Over the last few weeks, the streets and squares in both Urubamba and Cusco have come alive during the evenings with troupes of young people practicing their traditional dances for various parades and festivals over the coming months. For someone from a country where the streets become rather quiet after dark, sitting in the Plaza Tupac Amaru (Cusco) at 8pm, surround by hundreds of youngsters practicing their different dance routines – accompanied by shared CD players or bands comprised of traditional drums and wind instruments such as the sampoña (panpipe) and quena (Andean flute) – is certainly an experience. The fiesta season in Peru is well and truly under way.

Joining other countries around the world, Peruvians celebrated Mother's Day earlier in May, with children reading poems, performing dances and presenting flowers to their mothers in school, followed by religious masses, parties and special meals on the Sunday. The Festival of Señor de Torrechayoc took place the following weekend, celebrated again with several religious masses, processions and a dance competition. The streets were filled with colour and movement and music, as hundreds of people dressed in traditional



clothing danced the Mestiza Qoyacha, Capac Qolla and Ch'unchus, amongst many other Peruvian dances. Crowds lined the main avenues and plazas to watch them go by and stalls selling food and drinks popped up on the roadsides to provide sustenance to hungry revelers. At the same time, Ollantaytambo celebrated their deity, Señor de Choquekilli, with a three day festival of dancing and music and bull fights.

The month of May ends with the celebration of Corpus Christi – with more dancing and processions and food and music – which is preceded by a pilgrimage to the chapel of the Señor de Qoylloriti. Around 10000 pilgrims are said to make the journey to this chapel – situated in the foothills of the mountain Sinakara at around 4,600m above sea level – each year. Amongst them roam the customary dance troupes, including the *ukukus* or “tricksters” who play pranks on the pilgrims and keep order: this is one of the few Latin American festivals during which drinking is banned!

Outside all of the parties, it's work as usual for the volunteers of the Sacred Valley. Several volunteers have left since the beginning of May, but there has been an influx of new faces, with 17 new volunteers arriving in the first half of May alone! Read on to find out what our volunteers have been up to...



Line Pedersen, 21, Denmark, Teaching Program, 3 months



My name is Line Nordentoft. I am from Denmark and I am 21 years old. When faced with the question: why do you do volunteer work? I guess I could say what most people are thinking; that I chose to volunteer because I wanted to devote my 'year off' entirely to helping others in a selfless deed, but that would be the wrong answer, it would be the wrong answer for most volunteers. This choice is just as selfish as it is selfless. I chose to do this because I wanted to learn. I wanted to learn about the country, about teaching, about different ways of doing things, and most of all to learn about myself. Of course I wanted to help but I also expected to get something back, as our social manager told me: "it is only in the moment you do something for yourself that you are able to do something for others."

I have always been drawn to countries with a rich history and culture and after some research I felt like I had a good chance of making a difference in Peru, this

country is moving upwards economically, but it has some serious problems with the educational system. Therefore there are great opportunities to work with and improve different parts of the educational system. I worked at "Sagrado Corazon De Jesus" as an assisting teacher, this is a large school with more than 600 children who all learned to say 'teacher' or 'Lina', which made me feel welcome and wanted every day. But, you should not think that it has been a piece of cake. It has been one of the hardest, funniest, most frustrating and memorable things I have ever done.

That first day when I was briefly introduced to my teacher and then left at this huge school in a class with 30 students staring at me and my Spanish vocab reaching as far as 'hola', I just thought "oh dear God - what did I say yes to?". But because of the fact that running away was not a possibility, I pulled myself together and started working. And thanks to that decision I have now accomplished things I never

thought I would, I have learned more about myself than I thought possible. I have learned my boundaries and my downsides, but I have also learned the huge extension of things that I CAN do.

Besides working at the school I got the opportunity to work on an evening course twice a week, teaching the local handicraftsmen from the market in Pisac. They needed English because of the fact that not being able to talk to the tourists caused them to lose money. These classes were one of my favorite experiences here because these people actually wanted to learn English and secondly because I really got to know and interact with these people. I had so much fun and really saw the kind and loving nature of the Peruvian people.

When this course ended I felt like I had too much spare time on my hands so, my friend and I asked for another project and we would love for it to be of a more creative nature since that is actually our main competence. So, we got the opportunity to start a



children's choir. Again I was amazed of what we were able to do with some friendly people, some skills in pantomime and a few words in Spanish. We managed to lead a choir of 15 children, aged 10 to 12 in the local auditorium in Pisac and we even had a piano there most of the time.

For future volunteers I have four words of advice. The first two are the ones that you are given at induction day in the office: 'Patience and flexibility'; you arrive at your placement full of excitement and eager to do all kinds of changes, but remember that things are done differently here, and Rome was not build in one day. If you want to accomplish anything you need to take a deep breath and do it your way, but under their circumstances. The third is creativity. Carry it with you in all that you do and that way you will separate your activities from the traditional and stiff ones the children are mostly met with. Number four is self-irony. This has been my greatest tool during the teaching in all my classes. I would not want the children to look upon me as one of their other Professors. I would want them to see me as an equal and give me the respect of a friend. In Peru, English in general is not fun and holds no interest or relevance to students, by using self-irony and being able to laugh at myself with the them, I have been able to make the kids think that English might be fun as well - at least in some cases.



Rune Wriedt, 21, Denmark, Inca / Care Programs, 4 months



Like many people taking time out from education, Rune Wriedt, 21, from Denmark, decided to go travelling and spend some of his time volunteering. Since he had taken Spanish classes in school, he decided to make use of it to get to know South America. He came to Peru for four months, splitting his time between the Care Program and the Inca Project.

The kindergarten, in which Rune was placed, is in the small village of Sillacancha 15 minutes from Calca, where he lived with his host family. He found out that, despite the talent and devotion of the teacher, there's only so much one person can do with 30 children

between the ages of three and five. As a volunteer he felt that he could help the teacher to do her job as she would want to, therefore giving the children a better level of education. With lack of money and resources being a constant problem in Peruvian schools, Rune found that his contributions of handcrafted materials allowed for elaboration of more interesting activities too. *"All in all, the volunteer enables the kindergarten to function much better!"* he notes.

After the routine of the Care Program, Rune found the Inca Project to be different altogether, with no one day being the same as another. He did a lot of hiking to ruins, physical work, both at the archaeological sites (clearing with machetes) and on the grounds of the house, general maintenance of the volunteer house and community work in the town of Huyro.

"The volunteers are a crucial part of the archeological work in the valley," he says, "as the Peruvian state does not support a lot of work." Rune also noted that the community benefits from the project, especially the children who are given a good opportunity to learn English from the volunteers.

Additionally, Rune had a rather unusual experience as a Projects Abroad volunteer. During his placement at the Inca Project, there was a flash flood that affected the town. He joined the rest of the team helping the people in any way they could. *"Even though it was incredibly shocking and terrible, helping people move the contents of their houses – and wood and bricks – was one of the most meaningful things I ever did,"* he says.

Rune learned a lot of Spanish, especially whilst he was staying with his host family in Calca. He also found it interesting to experience the differences between Peru and his home country, Denmark. *"I noticed with joy that Peruvian kids seem to be a lot tougher than the Danish ones: I've seen them fall straight on their faces on concrete and get straight up – even if an adult was watching and the opportunity for pity was right there. Impressive."* He found that just being in Peru allowed him to gain a different perspective on life in Europe and has also made friends for life from all over the world.



"In general the feeling of doing something useful was always there, even though I didn't always do work that would leave physical evidence per se. It is more in the form of doing something that feels meaningful and leaves a personal mark with the people you're around." He advises future volunteers to come mentally prepared for anything and to learn a few words in Spanish!

INCA

ARCHAEOLOGY: Volunteers worked on clearing and mapping the archaeological sites at Yanayaco and Triunfo and also went exploring and clearing structures in Q'ochapata sector III.

We are having lessons on Vitcos and Yuraqrumi, on the archaeological structures in the Lucumayu Valley and also lessons on the Inca sites of Choquequirao and Machu Picchu. Archaeology briefings have increased as we prepare for excavations and explorations this month.

MAINTENENCE: The volunteers helped repair the road into Establo by filling in potholes with hardcore and we have been working on keeping the drainage system clear after the wet season with the odd mud fight thrown in for good measure. Other small projects have included construction at Establo to increase living space on the Inca program.

COMMUNITY WORK: We have continued working on the educational boards and we continue our weekly activities at the local library in Huyro. We also helped our friend Franklin clear around his banana trees for a morning. Volunteers are also working on murals for the new kindergarten in Huyro where quite a few walls are in need of artwork. We also try to maintain our weekly football games with the local teachers from Huyro.

On Tuesday 16th our director Tim de Winter gave an educational workshop for all the secondary and primary school teachers in the Huayopata district.

SOCIALS: Some of the volunteers had a chance to visit the tea factory in Yanayaco and follow the tea production process and we also visited the nearby waterfalls at Yanay. Volunteers also had the chance to partake in some of the "3 de Mayo" festivities in Huyro.

It might be worth mentioning that Zenobio (one of our archaeologists) went into hospital with appendicitis and that poor Wily (our handyman at the Establo) crashed his bike the first week on May and was lucky to escape badly bruised and battered.

All of us on the project wish them both a speedy recovery.

CARE

After going through the children's evaluation time at the schools, volunteers are now assisting teachers with teaching colours, shapes and to follow suggestions from the Rutas del Aprendizaje. The first project they worked on, was creating a suitable ambiance for learning in the classroom, everyone was involved.

This month was also very special as we celebrated Mother's Day and children got busy creating works of art for their mothers. Needless to say, our volunteers worked very hard to make sure that every kid had something pretty to take home to mom.

Volunteers are now more established and happy because they had the time to know their kids strengths and weaknesses and can plan the things they would like to teach.

TEACHING

On Thursday 18th of April we had our first meeting with the English teachers. All volunteers worked really hard, some of them created and taught a game that was distributed among the participants. The game was an excellent tool to review grammar in a fun way and it is thought to be used for different topics. Another group of volunteers was in charge of creating and showing a role play designed to get teachers involved with a new teaching tool called Rutas del Aprendizaje. Teachers enjoyed the role play because it was about a teacher who had class management problems. After discussing about what should be done in that case, volunteers showed a role play about a class with a teacher who had a positive class management. At the work shop we were pleased to have two specialists from the regional direction of education, who explained about the use of Rutas del Aprendizaje and teachers were glad to know firsthand this information.

At their placements, volunteers keep doing a nice job bringing innovation and fun. Jennifer Matheson decided to teach about foods by preparing salads with her students, they were very excited showing what they could do, some used only vegetables but others added some typical food like lima beans, quinoa, and fried pork, and of course "Chicha morada", a healthy drink made from purple corn.

Ida Callesen in Coya was asked to be the godmother for the 5th grade at the school Olympics; she was a very enthusiastic cheerleader at the games.

James Hancock keeps working with the students at Valle Sagrado taking advantage of his acting skills to train students in correct vocalization and pronunciation.

Tabitha Serle is working hard in helping even on her days off, doing teaching and helping in the care program.

SPORTS

Last month we had the help of Leonie Van Wieren, Tim Snailham and Mathias Johansen at the APU Pitusiray Center. They are working with youngsters' ages six to 15 in Pisac, Calca and Cusco; they all have experience coaching children which makes for a very professional work that combines well with their enthusiasm and initiative.

Marissa Wimer worked with Coach Flory in Calca and Pisac at our Volleyball Project. Marissa likes practicing many different sports and found at our Volleyball Project the right space to work with young girls, participating in all the curricular activities as well as introducing her own. The coaches working with Marissa expressed their appreciation for her work and attitude and efforts like taking Spanish classes in order to better her communication's skills.

We welcome Silke Baum who started working at Valle Sagrado high school. She is using her knowledge and experience in aerobics to introduce this discipline into the school's curricula. So far, so good! Everybody loves it.

Our Sports volunteers are a very tight group; they not only share the same program but also share other activities outside work. It is good to see them very involved in what they do.

PULPO AL OLIVO

OCTOPUS IN OLIVE SAUCE

Ingredients:

- 3lb 5 oz (1.5 K) Octopus
- 15 black olives, pitted
- 3 tablespoons lime juice
- 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup olive oil
- 2 tablespoons minced parsley
- 2 eggs
- Salt and pepper
- 3 tablespoons olive oil for decoration



Preparation:

Place octopus in a pan with boiling water for 30 to 40 minutes until tender. Remove and place in ice water.

Blend eggs, salt and pepper, lime juice and mustard. Poor in the olive oil slowly until a thick mayonnaise is obtained.

Divide and remove half of the mayonnaise from blender. Set aside.

Add olives to blender and blend until you get a nice and smooth puree. Mix with the reserved mayonnaise.

Cut octopus in slices, place them in a serving dish and poor some sauce on top. Garnish with parsley and olive oil.

Enjoy!